

Education, Planning and Outreach Meeting Minutes
4000 West Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia

February 6, 2008
2:00pm

Present: Richard E. Railey, Jr., Chairman, Sherry Crumley, Mary Louisa Pollard;
Absent: Randy J. Kozuch; **Acting Director:** G. Mike Bise; **Senior Staff:** David Whitehurst, Gary Martel, Charlie Sledd and Virgil Kopf.

Mr. Railey welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Railey stated the minutes of the January 22, 2008 meeting have been distributed for review. Mr. Railey called for correction, additions, etc. to the minutes. There being no correction, additions, etc., Mr. Railey called for a motion to approve the minutes. **Ms. Crumley moved that the minutes of the meeting be approved as submitted. Motion Seconded by Ms. Pollard. Ayes: Crumley, Pollard and Railey.**

Legislative Update: Mr. Charlie Sledd provided the Committee a legislative update for the 2008 Session of the Virginia General Assembly. Discussion was held by the committee on HB 1352 Board of Game and Inland Fisheries. It reconstitutes the membership of the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Sledd for his report.

Strategic Planning: Opportunities and Threats: Mr. Railey called upon Virgil Kopf for his presentation. Mr. Bise stated during the January Board meeting, approval was given for the agency to move forward with a management study. A RFP (request for proposal) has been prepared and sent out for advertisement. An internal committee has been formed to evaluate the proposals as they are received. Mr. Bise stated a memo from the Chief of Staff's office has been received indicating a freeze on hiring and travel for state agencies. Discussion was held on several vacancies within the agency.

Mr. Kopf provided the following short term projections: (1) the next two fiscal years, as presented in the current biennial budget will be tight; (2) the agency will have difficulty maintaining current personnel levels and address normal increases in non-personnel costs; (3) there are no short-term additional revenue sources and current revenue sources are not growing as rapidly as expenses; (4) the capital needs/desires of the agency need to be defined in conjunction with the operating budget. The long term projections are: (1) capital projects must be defined and a plan developed to fund them concurrent with developing operating strategies; (2) the agency has show decreased funding for

equipment over the past several years which cannot continue without significant impacts on operational effectiveness; (3) operational cost are projected to increase faster than appropriations are expanding resulting in a squeeze on personnel/non-personnel expenditure ratios; (4) technology cost are not increasing but the ability of technology to address efficiency or effectiveness is severely constrained by current VITA policies and actions. By conducting the management study by outside personnel, it will help the agency develop the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2010. Mr. Kopf also discussed HB 38 and the Watercraft sales and use tax and the revenue they generate. Mr. Kopf also gave the Board options on how to increase possible funding for the agency. During the next five years to ten years, the agency will need to develop sound, integrated operational and capital plans; increase customer service; identify additional resource funding for the agency; restructuring the agency to become more efficient and effective.

A discussion was held on the use of federal monies for outreach and marketing activities.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Kopf for his remarks.

New Board Member Orientation: Mr. Railey stated the new Board Member Orientation was a great way to learn about all of the activities of the agency and the Board. Ms. Pollard suggested a two-day informal program due to the volume of information given in a short period of time. She has also visited the regional offices and some of the hatcheries and received useful information.

Update – Children in Nature: The Chairman called upon Mr. David Whitehurst to provide an update – Children in Nature Initiative program. The agency has taken the lead to bring all state agencies together and prepared a pre-proposal to submit to the Child in Nature Network. Governor Kaine has written a letter of support for the pre-proposal of this program. Staff is optimistic that we will be invited to submit a full proposal for a grant of approximately \$1M to advance a multi-faceted program to connect children with nature across Virginia. An update will be provided at the next committee meeting.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Whitehurst for his presentation.

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) Hunter Marketing Program: The NSSF has opened the application process for the agency to apply for funding to conduct a multi-media marketing program for lapsed hunting license buyers. Last year the agency applied for the grant and did not receive any funding. A marketing firm that has been involved with the NSSF program has approached the agency again this year and has encouraged the agency to move forward with the process to apply for funding. The total grant is for approximately \$75,000 with a match from the agency. The staff does not have a recommendation on how to proceed at this time.

After a discussion, the committee decided to delay participation in the program due to funding restraints of the agency and staffing.

Committee Member Issues: Ms. Crumley said she would like for the Committee to recommend revising their mission statement to include the following language: “to safeguard the rights of the citizens to hunt, fish and harvest game as described in Article 21, Section 4 of the Constitution of Virginia.” The committee will recommend this inclusion at the April board meeting.

Public Comments: Mr. Steve Fritton spoke about his experiences in working in the community college system, turkey hunting and the 2nd grade program his participated in over the Thanksgiving holiday. It was 2 great hours of interesting questions from the students.

He encouraged the agency to keep kids interested in nature and outdoor activities.

The staff stated that the agency will overcome the issues that it currently faces and the constituents present at the Board meeting today said they are willing to help the agency achieve its goals.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm. The next meeting will be held on April 1, 2008 at 7:30am.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth B. Drewery
Board Secretary